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# The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine.

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VOL. IX.

APRIL, 1908.

No. 2.

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LETTERS FROM THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE  
TO HON. HENRY LAURENS, 1777-1780.

*(Continued from the January number.)*

[48]

brunswick camp 6 july

dear sir

I have just Receiv'd the inclos'd letter for Congress from a french gentleman who wishes I would Reccommend his petition to them—I therefore take that Liberty, and if the demands of M<sup>or</sup> dubois are comply'd with I beg you would be so good as to send theyr Resolve upon the matter to me or to g<sup>n</sup> gates. with the highest Regard I have the honor to be

dear sir

Your most obedient

Servant the M<sup>is</sup> de Lafayette

*Endorsed:*<sup>1</sup> Marquis de la Fayette  
6<sup>th</sup> July 1778.

[49]

Brunswick Camp 6 july 1778

dear sir

while I am going to send so many public letters to the

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<sup>1</sup>In handwriting of Moses Young, secretary to Mr. Laurens.

president of Congress, I must give myself the pleasure of writing two lines to my friend M<sup>s</sup> Laurens, and inquire from him how he does—I am going to morrow towards king's ferry at the head of the second line—god may grant I could find there at My arrival, a fine bundle of letters from you, full of european intelligence—I Confess that profound ignorance of what is going on there, puts me out of patience. do'nt you think that there will be soon a *total peace* or a *terrible war* through the world?

M<sup>s</sup> de gimat and M<sup>s</sup> Capitaine are going to take a survey of some positions or affairs, during last campaign and the begining of this—I hope the former will bring me letters from you and perhaps some verbal messages.

I have the honor to inclose you three public letters one I could not refuse to M<sup>or</sup> du bois, the second in behalf of the M<sup>is</sup> de vienne, the third for the so much spoken of affair of the worthy M<sup>s</sup> touzard. it seems to me M<sup>s</sup> de vienne would do very well with a body of horse, but am afraid the new arrangement will render it very difficult. the affair of m<sup>s</sup> touzard I hope will not last very long.

You have heard good deal, I dare say, of the court against g<sup>n</sup> Lee—I am very unwillingly an evidence in it but am happy enough as to have nothing material to say— that g<sup>n</sup> lee is very much prejudiced in favor of his english nation—if he is condemn'd, certainly he must be guilty of some thing very ugly.

Farewell, my dear sir, I wo'nt trouble you longer but to beg the continuance of your Remembrance and affection, and to assure you of the high Regard and very intimate friendship I have the honor to be with

dear sir                      Your affectionate  
the M<sup>is</sup> de Lafayette

*Endorsed* :<sup>2</sup> Marquis de la Fayette

6<sup>th</sup> July 1778.

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<sup>2</sup>By Moses Young.

[50]

*Addressed:* *private*

to

The honorable henry Laurens esq.  
President of Congress

a

Philadelphia

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Camp Near Paramus 14<sup>th</sup> july 1778

I [word or two destroyed] honor'd with your favor of the 10<sup>th</sup> last, and beg you would Receive my sincere thanks for the important intelligence you are pleas'd to communicate to me—as the division of the army I command is just going to march, I will confine myself in very few lines.

I beg leave to mention a thing which seems to me of the highest importance the french admiral will no doubt want frequent intelligences, and great many accidents may happen to those which will be sent to him—I think therefore that an immense plenty of boats should be Ready and fitted out in every part of the Continent, that if one do'nt arrive, others may Reach him—no time should be lost or expense spar'd for to convey the least news, as they may prouve of [several words destroyed] quence—do'nt you think also, sir, that our fleet may be in [several words destroyed] lots— I have wrote to the count destaing in a letter which g<sup>n</sup> [name destroyed] is going to send him.

I beg you would make apologies to M<sup>s</sup> Richard henry Lee for my not answering to him, and communicate this schort letter to that gentleman—or other members of Congress who may have any influence in sending intelligences to our Admiral

with the highest Regard and most sincere affection I have the honor to be

dear sir

Yours the M<sup>rs</sup> de Lafayette*Endorsed:* Marquis delafayette

14 July 1778

Answ<sup>d</sup> 18<sup>th</sup>

[51]

White plains 23<sup>d</sup> july 1778

dear Sir

I have receiv'd your favor by m<sup>s</sup> de vienne, and will do myself the honor of answering some few lines, as I am just setting off for a little journey which I like very well, and which you will know the particularities off by his excellency's Letters.

I am entirely of your opinion, my good friend, about the granting of high Ranks to stranger gentlemen in this very crisis where national officers think themselves somewhat injur'd by new arrangements—no body in the world may have a higher respect than this I entertain for those virtuous men who leaving the plow for the sword turn'd out under the greatest Risks, under the greatest disadvantages, and by their noble conduct brought the Revolution to this glorious period—a thing may be added with the most candid truth, that I know few officers whose merits may be Compar'd to the merit and talents of some of your country-borns—one packer, one steward, filly, butler, h. levingston &c. would be respected among the most distinguished officers of any army in the world

but these reflexions I will heartly make with M<sup>s</sup> laurens, but never with the president of Congress, as I think it Consistent with my duty, with my love for my country, and my sense of the confidence her sons have trusted upon me, to reccommend as warmly, and forward as speedily as possible the advancement of all the frenchmen in our service. I confess I have been surpris'd and in the same time pleas'd to see m<sup>s</sup> de vienne honour'd with the commission of colonel; I will also be pleas'd to see M<sup>s</sup> touzard a major but nothing more because at length no body would accept of a captain's commission.

You will be also troubl'd by me for M<sup>s</sup> de Lesser who came over with me, who then wanted to be a brigadier general and wants again the same Rank. he is a good officer, he distinguish'd himself last war at marbourg, and I

beg you would Remember that I reccommend him to the *president of Congress* for the succe's of his enterprise upon the Rank of general.

There is a thing I now particularly Reccommend both to the *president and to my friend*—m<sup>s</sup> Capitaine one of my family has got the Commission of a captain of engeneers. he has since been useful to the country by his drafts of the susquehanna. you Remember that I did object a little to his being made *an engeneer* because I foresaw what would happen. the *corps du genie* can't help considering him as an officer of theyrs who is to do duty with them—M<sup>s</sup> Capitaine was in the marshal of broglio's family, they made me a present of him and I attach'd him to serve to me not only in america and in war but also to stay in the family in peaceble times—such an officer I ca'nt spare, and I will employ him to make plans of our positions and battles for g<sup>n</sup> washington, for me, and also for the king who will be glad to have an exact draft of g<sup>n</sup> washington's battles—the only way of getting him out of the engeneery is to have for him a commission of Major in the line; he is now in my family but I want to have him entirely my surjeon, aide de camp. I do'nt speack to any body about that affair, and as I have it more at heart than any other business of that kind I want to have it soon done to avoid any compromise

Farewell, my dear sir, I have been much longer than I thought or even I ought—I hope we'll find the Red birds at home, and then we schall take care of them—the count destaing has desired to add his land troops to any detachement I would command

You see this letter is a private one, and the greatest part of it must be only *entre nous*. adieu, my good friend, with the highest Regard and most sincere affection I have the honor to be dear sir

Your most obedient servant  
The M<sup>l</sup>s de Lafayette

*Endorsed:* Marquis delafayette  
23 July 1778 Rec<sup>d</sup> 26<sup>th</sup>.

[52]

Rhode island the 25 august 1778

My dear sir

I have been a very long time without hearing from or writing to you, the hope of telling soon agreeable news, the uncertainty of our situation, have always stopp'd my penn—and if I did not write as soon as the french fleet came back from the poursuit of the ennemy, and went to boston, it is because I did not like to afflict my friend's heart by the horrid picture of what I have seen upon this island—but truth urges me to speak, I fear you would be prevented by false relations, and I must therefore trouble you with this letter. I will not go back to give the account of what has been done on our part before the admiral went after the british fleet—but I may assure you upon my honor, that he was not at all influenc'd by any behaviour of any body, tho' some try to insinuate it, and that he did consider the whole as you and me would have done.

it is useless to say that *we americans* are a little indebted to france—it is useless to Repass upon the advantages the fleet has already afforded to these coasts upon a military as well as a civil point of view—six frigattes one of them was a check for a whole state have been burnt and destroy'd—the coasts clear'd—the harbours oppened—the british army and navy kept together philadelphia evacuated upon the intelligence of that fleet &c, &c. I may add that the fleet was ask'd for america by the count destaing himself, which circumstance I heard by a third person, and I give you under the law of secrecy.

when after that storm which took away from his hands all the advantages of a gain'd victory, which put him in the worst schatered condition, when he came back to Rhode island (because he had promis'd to come back) I was sent on board by g<sup>n</sup> sullivan—I found him more distress'd than any man I ever saw, by the idea that he would be some weeks out of the possibility of serving america—I am a witness that he did every thing to convince himself and convince others that they could stay—but the orders of the

king, the Representations of all his captains, the opinion of all the fleet even of some american pilots made it necessary for him to go to boston. indeed, my dear sir, in such circumstances as he was, which are too long to be explain'd how could he help it?

Now, my dear friend, I am going to hurt your tender feelings by a picture of what I have seen—forgive me for it—it is a lover of America who speaks to you with indignation against a parcel of his *adopted countrymen*. I hope such a thing would never be the case with the french nation I have the honor to belong to—but then I would speak plain to french men, as I do now to an american.

Could you believe that forgetting any national obligation, forgetting what they were owing to that same fleet, what they were yet to expect from them, the people on this island treated them as a generous one would not treat his ennemies. discourses which I have seen myself almost oblig'd to Revenge were publickly heard—many leaders themselves finding they were disappointed aba'ndonn'd their minds to illiberality and ungratefulness—but it is useless to afflict your virtue by so ugly a picture; I schall however add that the french hospital (so told one gentlemen to be depended upon) has been treated in the most inhuman way since the fleet has lost some masts and has been oblig'd to go to boston.

that affair, I consider, my dear sir, I do consider upon a much more extensive point of view—our external and internal ennemies will take a great advantage of that piece of ungenerosity some have been guilty of upon this island—it would be a great pity that some Rascally discontents schould alter the union and confidence Ready to be establish'd between the two nations—I see one only way of Repairing those evils which is this.

That congress to settle the minds of the people, make a fine Resolve for approving of what has pass'd and presenting theyr thanks to the admiral, that Orders be immediately given to furnish them with provisions, biskets, and all the things they stand in a schoking want off—that as soon



as they are Repair'd which will be in three weeks new plans be entered into immediately for begining again the expedition of newport, and afterwards taking or new york or hallifax, or s<sup>t</sup>. augustine &c.—I confess this last operation would please me extremely as we are going upon the winter season, and it would be a great service to the southern states I would beg leave to advise that a courier be sent immediately from congress to boston—for you know the bostonians. I think I schall be oblig'd to go there myself by the common desire of all the general officers—however disagreeable it is to me, to be absent two days and an half from the army, my zeal is such that I will chearfully go there and execute my commission *to know when the count may join us and engage him to come as soon as possible* the latter I am sure he will do for I never saw a man so well dispos'd to serve us with all his power. the american troops will stay upon this island and wait for events, so it has been decided by a Majority of votes.

farewell, my dear sir, forgive the hurry of my letter—I am urg'd to write it by the love of my country, of america, and the desire I have to see them well connected together—the sincerity of my sentiments, and the frankness of my heart do'nt want apology—you may show some parts of my scribbling to any member of congress you will think prudent and proper. farewell, my good friend, with the highest regard I am

Your affectionate

The M<sup>is</sup> de Lafayette

*Endorsed:* Marq. delafayette 25 Aug 1778—

Rec<sup>d</sup>. 3<sup>d</sup>. Septem—

(*To be continued in the next number of this magazine.*)